

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Socialist candidates: financial crisis sparks interest in socialism
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 72/NO. 43 NOVEMBER 3, 2008

Washington, Islamabad intensify Pakistan war

BY DOUG NELSON

Washington is deepening its military cooperation with the Pakistani government in the war against al-Qaeda and Taliban forces in the region. Washington and London sent a few dozen special forces to Pakistan in mid-October to train and fight with Pakistan's Frontier Corps, according to the *Christian Science Monitor*.

The White House has also been pushing a plan to send F-16 warplanes and other aviation equipment to support the Pakistani military's intensifying war with Islamist militias inside the country. The Pakistani military held a first-ever briefing for parliament as part of the effort to win broader support for the war.

The intensifying war takes place in the midst of a deepening economic crisis in Pakistan.

Washington continues to carry out unilateral strikes of its own inside Pakistan. Nine people, including at least five civilians, were killed in the latest air strike by U.S. drone-fired missiles in the North Waziristan region October 9, according to the online English edition of Pakistan's *Daily Jang*.

The attack leveled the home of Maul-

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Layoffs rise with world financial crisis

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The financial crisis and credit squeeze is beginning to have deeper economic and social consequences for working people worldwide despite the injection of hundreds of billions of dollars into the banking system by Washington and imperialist governments in Europe.

"U.S. industrial activity is falling at the fastest pace in decades," noted *Investor's Business Daily* October 16, "adding to evidence that the credit crunch is causing the economy to reverse faster than expected."

Nationwide production at factories, mines, and utilities declined 2.8 percent in September, the largest monthly drop since December 1974, according to the Federal Reserve.

These figures reflect rising layoffs and plant closures as workers face what could become the deepest recession in decades. General Motors is closing its SUV plant in Janesville, Wisconsin, on December 23, laying off 1,200 members of the United Auto Workers. The company also announced that a stamping plant near Grand Rapids, Michigan, employing some 1,500 workers,

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'We need a workers and farmers gov't'



Militant/Eddie Beck

Alyson Kennedy, SWP vice presidential candidate, campaigns in Atlanta.

Students in Texas hear socialist candidate speak

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND STEVE WARSHALL

RIO GRANDE VALLEY, Texas—Róger Calero, the Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate, campaigned here October 14–15, speaking to more than 130 students at college meetings in two Valley cities. The meetings reflect the growing interest in the socialist campaign.

At the McAllen campus of South Texas College, Calero spoke to 90 students in a debate with Brownsville

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Georgia: Kennedy backs legalization for immigrants

BY BILL ARTH

ATLANTA—Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, talked with immigrant workers in jail awaiting deportation, poultry workers, and students on several area campuses during an October 10–14 campaign stop in Georgia.

"It's been quite a year," she told an Atlanta campaign rally of more than 30 supporters, referring to the unfolding capitalist financial crisis. "The wealthy billionaire rulers in the

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Marxist educational weekend: unions and fight for state power

BY CINDY JAQUITH

NEW YORK—A socialist educational weekend on "Trade Unions and the Working-Class Fight for State Power" took place here October 18–19, sponsored by the New York and Newark, New Jersey, branches of the Socialist Workers Party and the New York Young Socialists.

Participating in the classes were

more than 50 workers and youth from New York and Newark, as well as Boston, Philadelphia, Montreal, and Washington, D.C. They devoted the weekend to intensive reading, study, and collective discussion of Karl Marx's pamphlet *Wages, Price and Profit* and the 1866 resolution of the International Working Men's Association on "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future." Participants also got out to working-class neigh-

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11-day special: \$3 subscription to 'Militant'

BY ANGEL LARISCY

From October 25 through November 4, supporters of the *Militant* newspaper across the globe are stepping up efforts to win new readers and long-term subscribers to the socialist press. During this 11-day campaign, an introductory subscription to the paper is only \$3.

The special effort is part of an eight-week campaign to win 2,400 *Militant*

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The Crisis Has Barely Begun!

... and Workers' Fight to End the Wages System Is Posed

Jack Barnes, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

Reaching to the World:

Workers and Oppressed Nations Unite!

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New International* magazine and *Our History Is Still Being Written*, recently returned from Equatorial Guinea

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- **8:30 a.m.—1 p.m.** Meeting of supporters of the communist movement (Location to be announced)

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Washington, imperialist allies pressure Fiji gov't

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Fiji's interim prime minister and military commander, Voreqe Bainimarama, was denied a visa to enter the United States, preventing him from attending a mid-October meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington, D.C.

The exclusion of Bainimarama is part of stepped-up pressure by the governments of the United States, New Zealand, Australia, and the European Union. This includes economic and travel sanctions against Fiji following Bainimarama's ousting of the Laisenia Qarase government in December 2006. These imperialist powers are demanding parliamentary elections be held by March 2009 under the country's existing constitution and electoral laws.

Bainimarama has said that elections should not be held until the current divisive voting system, which racially classifies people to determine where they can run as candidates and who they can vote for, is removed. It serves to bolster the political power of Fiji's traditional aristocracy of chiefs.

Throughout the history of modern Fiji, both the British colonial regime and governments since independence in 1970 have worked to divide indigenous Fijians from Indo-Fijians. The latter are descendants of indentured laborers brought from India in the 19th century to work in Fiji's sugar plantations.

A Great Council of Chiefs was set up under British rule and has dominated Fiji since independence. Among the council's powers is the right to appoint the president and almost half the senate.

A "Peoples Charter for Change, Peace and Progress" has been drafted by the Bainimarama government, which calls for the electoral laws to be based on proportional representation, lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 years, and casting one vote for one candidate from a common voters roll.

New Zealand prime minister Helen Clark labels the charter "a diversion" and demands any constitutional or electoral changes only be made after elections are held under the current race-based system. On October 11, Australian foreign minister Stephen Smith repeated the threat made at the August meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum that Fiji would be suspended from that regional body if elections are not held in March.

Right-wing forces have carried out three coups in Fiji. Two were in 1987, led by Brig. Sitiveni Rabuka, and one in 2000, led by rightist businessman George Speight. The coups were directed against Labour Party-led governments and sought to shore up the authority of the Great Council of Chiefs.

U.S.-born Pakistani fights conspiracy charge

BY TOM BAUMANN

NEW YORK—Supporters of Syed Fahad Hashmi packed the U.S. District Court in Manhattan October 14 in support of his fight for justice. Hashmi, a U.S. citizen, is charged with conspiracy to provide material support to al-Qaeda.

After graduating from Brooklyn College in 2003, Hashmi continued his education at London Metropolitan University. While there sometime in 2004 he al-

Sweden book fair draws 101,000 visitors



Militant/Pierre Kraus

GOTHENBURG, Sweden—An international team of socialist workers and Young Socialists staffed a booth with revolutionary literature at the annual book fair here September 25–28, an important cultural event, which drew 101,000 visitors. Among the most popular titles were *Ny International* no. 4 in Swedish (*New International* no. 12 in English), which features the articles "Their Transformation and Ours," and "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun"; the new Swedish translation of *Teamster Rebellion; Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* in English; and the recently released *New International* no. 14 that features "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X," and "The Clintons' Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis." A total of 57 books and nine subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold.

—DAG TIRSÉN

lowed an acquaintance, Junaid Babar, to stay at his apartment for two weeks. The charges claim that Babar brought with him luggage that contained ponchos and other rain gear. The government alleges that at some point Babar gave the rain gear to a high-ranking member of al-Qaeda, which Hashmi's indictment describes as "military gear."

Babar, who was arrested by the FBI in New York in 2004, faced 70 years on charges of involvement in a terrorist plot in London. He cut a deal to provide evidence against Hashmi and others in exchange for a reduced sentence, according to press reports.

Hashmi was arrested at London's Heathrow airport as he was preparing to board a flight to Pakistan to visit family. He was held in Belmarsh prison for 11 months before being extradited to the United States. Even though Hashmi is not charged with providing money or weapons to al-Qaeda, he continues to be held under Special Administrative

Measures. He is on 23-hour lockdown. Aside from one visit from an immediate family member per week, he has no other contact with people besides prison officials and his lawyer.

In addition to these draconian conditions, the court may withhold the prosecution's evidence from Hashmi and his attorneys. New charges can be presented against him up until the day before his trial begins and he is not allowed to speak or give statements through his lawyers to the press.

Support for Hashmi is mounting, however. As of August 18, some 500 academics and professionals have signed a petition opposing his treatment in prison. The list of signatories includes well-known political activists Noam Chomsky, Angela Davis, and Joshua Cohen.

At the court hearing Sean Maher, Hashmi's lawyer, thanked everyone for attending and encouraged all to be present at the next hearing. For more information, visit www.freefahad.com.

THE MILITANT

Understanding the financial crisis

A worldwide credit freeze, a declining stock market with wild swings, declining commodity prices, and the beginning of factory closings. Only the 'Militant' looks at this from the standpoint of the working class and cuts through the double talk of the big-business news media. Don't miss a single issue!



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Calero in Texas

Continued from front page

Municipal Judge Ben Neece representing the Libertarian Party. The meeting was sponsored by the student government.

During the discussion many of the questions centered on the candidates' views on the economy. The Rio Grande Valley has the lowest income in Texas and high unemployment. In the rural areas of the Valley the poverty rate is 52 percent and unemployment is 30 percent. These official figures are understated and don't include residents without papers.

The majority of the students are Chicano or from Mexican families.

Neece told the students, "We are all partly responsible for the crisis, living our middle-class lives, relying too much on credit. But the government is also responsible. They have been meddling in the free workings of the economy." He pointed to the Libertarian platform that calls for no government interference in the economy.

"Let the economy alone and it will repair itself," the judge said.

Calero responded, "This crisis is part of the normal workings of the capitalist system that is once again bringing the world to the edge of financial

collapse. This crisis will continue and will deepen. The only solution is to build a movement that will throw the billionaire ruling families out of power and replace them with a government of workers and farmers.

"You can see elements of that movement already beginning," he said, pointing to the "massive demonstrations led by immigrant workers in May of 2006, and again in 2007 and 2008."

"You don't have to accept the brutality of capitalism," said Calero. "Don't let them tell you that we are 'all in this together' or that everyone is 'middle class.' Join in the struggles of workers and farmers," he urged the students. "You can be part of this revolutionary movement, part of making history."

One student asked Calero, since the socialist candidate was against the "bailout," what did he propose to get the economy get moving again.

"We can't patch up their system," Calero answered. "We call for measures that respond to the attacks on our class, that unite workers. For a shorter work-week with no cut in weekly take-home pay to spread around the available work. We are for a massive program of public works to give jobs to millions building schools, roads, and hospitals. Such a



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Róger Calero, SWP candidate for U.S. president (inset), addressing students during debate with Libertarian candidate at South Texas College in Rio Grande Valley. On stage are Miguel García and Darien Fernandez, members of the student government, which sponsored the meeting.

program can build comfortable and affordable housing for millions."

Another student said he saw a news program about the housing "glut." "Why build more homes," he asked, "if there are too many already?"

"They say there is a housing surplus," Calero responded, "but like all 'surpluses' under capitalism, they won't build more because they can't profitably sell them, not because there is a lack of need."

In response to a student's question about women's right to choose abortion,

Neece said that he could not support government interference in the matter because his party's principles opposed all government interference.

Calero pointed to his campaign platform's stand for abortion rights and said that in addition to supporting women's legal right to choose abortion, "We have to campaign to reopen facilities and break down barriers to women exercising this right."

The following day Calero participated in a teach-in of some 40 students and professors at the Edinburg campus of the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) on "The Cost of Building a Border Wall," sponsored by the UTPA Political Science Association, Students for Peace, Young Democrats, and the Resist the Wall Coalition.

Calero spoke on a panel with UTPA professors Rod Summery and Samuel Freeman and Veronica Villarreal of the La Unión del Pueblo Entero.

Calero pointed out that the wall is not designed to stop immigration, but to deepen divisions. "Its purpose is to create fear and divert us away from the class nature of our problems."

In an exchange on the value of actions organized by students in protests at the wall Calero said, "Don't let anyone tell you the actions you organize in the streets and in teach-ins like this don't matter. They do!"

"And we need to organize a different kind of government," he continued. "A workers and farmers government, to invite our Mexican brothers and sisters on both sides of the wall to tear it down with us and to use those materials pictured in the slides shown here today to begin to build the houses and schools we need."

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA Miami

The War at Home—Stop Attacks on Workers Rights. Fri., Oct. 31. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. Donation: \$5 program, \$5 dinner. 6777 NW 7th Ave. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK Manhattan

The Young Socialists Presents: "Come Hear the Socialist Candidate for U.S. President." Speaker: Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president. Tues., Oct. 28, 6:00 p.m. Thomas Hunter room 105. Hunter College (68th and Lexington). For more information: newyorkys@gmail.com

Georgia: Kennedy backs legalization fight

Continued from front page

United States and throughout Europe are trying to find something to shore up the capitalist system and insure the flow of their profits."

"The solution of the capitalist politicians in Congress—including our opponents, Barack Obama and John McCain—starts with how to protect the wealthy and stabilize their system," Kennedy said. "They put it in the framework that 'we' will have to sacrifice. But they're talking about us, not them. The socialist campaign starts with what is necessary to defend the toilers of the world from being devastated by the deepening economic crisis. We are proud that we opposed the \$700 billion giveaway to the banks."

Kennedy was joined on the platform by Eleanor García, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate. García described how the socialist campaign has joined in the fight to stop the execution of Troy Davis and in the fight against the arrest of immigrant workers in raids in Laurel, Mississippi, and Greenville, South Carolina. García and campaign supporters traveled to both towns following the raids to extend solidarity to the workers detained.

Ilsa Hernández, an activist in the fight to defend immigrant workers, hosted a reception for Kennedy at her restaurant, Latino Express, in Carrollton, Georgia. Seven workers from Honduras and one from Nicaragua attended the event. One worker came on his lunch break from a

nearby poultry plant.

Kennedy joined about 30 immigrant rights supporters to meet with immigrant workers at Stewart Detention Center, a private prison in Lumpkin in west Georgia. Hugo, a construction worker from Mexico, said that agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) came to his trailer claiming to be looking for someone else. They arrested him and his girlfriend instead. "We demand the government immediately halt all deportations and extend legal status to all undocumented workers," Kennedy explained.

Hugo described a four-day hunger strike the prisoners carried out to protest the bad food and small portions in the jail. The food got a little better after their action, but then it went back to what it had been. As punishment, the jailers took away outdoor privileges and television for a week.

Kennedy also spoke at a class on African history at Spelman College and campaigned from a table at the weekly Market Friday on campus.

Kennedy also spoke at a meeting sponsored by Common Ground and Students for Peace at the University of Georgia (UGA) in Athens. She completed her stop here with a visit to the Georgia State University (GSU) campus in Atlanta, where she met with students, including four from Socialist Endeavor.

While in Georgia, Kennedy was interviewed by the *Red and Black* student newspaper at UGA and the *GSU Signal*, the campus paper at GSU. She was also interviewed by the Hispanic News Service, a Spanish-language radio news service that broadcasts in the southeastern United States, and *Prensa Alterna*, an Atlanta-area Spanish-language newspaper.

Clay Dennison, Eleanor García, and Loretta Van Pelt contributed to this article.

SWP presidential campaign tour schedule



Presidential candidate Róger Calero (foreground) at rally outside Georgia State capitol September 11 demanding freedom for Troy Davis, who faces death sentence.

Presidential candidate Róger Calero

October 24 Philadelphia
Oct. 25, 27–28 New York
Oct. 26, 29–30 Newark, NJ
Oct. 31–Nov. 1 Washington D.C.
November 2–3 Chicago
November 4 New York



Vice presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy (right) at demonstration May 1 in Chicago demanding legalization for undocumented immigrants.

Vice presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy

October 25–28 San Francisco
October 29 Seattle
October 30–31 New Orleans
Nov 1 Houston
November 2–3 Twin Cities
November 4 New York

Subscription drive

Continued from front page
readers by November 23.

In the United States, most areas are significantly behind on their sales quotas. Organizing every day during the 11-day push to take advantage of the steeply discounted subscription is necessary to win new readers and get back on schedule. Interest in the Socialist Workers Party candidates leading up to the U.S. elections presents new opportunities to do this.

Discussions around the worldwide financial crisis also spark interest in subscribing, because the *Militant* is the only paper that explains what is happening from a working-class perspective.

Houston *Militant* distributors traveled six hours to the Rio Grande Valley with Róger Calero, SWP candidate for U.S. president, October 14–15. Calero spoke to classes and meetings at South Texas College in McAllen and the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg and participated in campaign tables along with Steve Warshell, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress from Houston’s 18th district. They sold 21 subscriptions to students during the two-day team.

Over the next week and a half, Jacquie Henderson reports from Houston, campaigners will be traveling to New Orleans with Alyson Kennedy, SWP candidate for vice president, setting up tables at the University of North Texas in Denton, visiting meat packers in east Texas, and campaigning among workers and students in Houston.

In New Zealand, Communist League parliamentary candidates Annalucia Vermunt and Patrick Brown are promoting the *Militant* and *New International* no. 14 magazine on their campaign tables, reports Janet Roth.

“Vermunt participated in events organized in Ruatoki to commemorate the anniversary of commando-style police raids on the Maori community Oct. 15, 2007,” says Roth. The raids were mounted on the pretext of fighting terrorism. During the commemoration Vermunt and supporters sold four subscriptions to the *Militant*.

In cities where supporters are behind schedule, they are mapping out plans to get current. Daily teams during the 11-day period in New York will include soapboxing with socialist candidates in working-class communities, campus tables, door-to-door teams, and campaign events. Seth Galinsky reports they have adopted a goal of 134 subscriptions to get on schedule.

Those who subscribe to the paper can purchase a copy of *New International* no. 14, featuring the articles “The Clintons’ Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis” and “Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X,” for only \$10. To date, more than 75 copies of the magazine have been reported sold.



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Supporters of the *Militant* sell subscriptions to the newspaper and Pathfinder books at Georgia State University in Atlanta September 22. At center showing books to students is Eleanor García, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia.

You can join the effort to get out the *Militant* during this special campaigning. Sign up your friends, coworkers, fellow students, and neighbors. For only \$3 during this week they can read the socialist newsweekly that tells the truth about the struggles of workers and toil-

ers around the world and presents a fighting perspective for those seeking to resist the offensive by the bosses and their governments as they attempt to make us pay for their financial crisis. Contact a distributor listed on page 8 to find out more.

Impact of financial crisis broadens

Continued from front page
will shut its doors at the end of 2009. Daimler AG, the world’s largest maker of heavy vehicles, said October 14 it is closing plants in Oregon and in Ontario, Canada, eliminating 3,500 jobs. Alcoa, the largest U.S. aluminum company, is shutting its smelter in Rockdale, Texas, cutting 660 jobs by early December.

Retail sales decline

U.S. retail sales have declined for three months in a row, the first time this has happened since 1992, when records began being kept. In September sales were down 1.2 percent, which included a decline of nearly 4 percent in sales of cars and auto parts and 2.3 percent in clothing and furniture purchases. Linen ‘n Things, once the second largest U.S. home furnishings chain and now in bankruptcy, is conducting liquidation sales at its 371 stores. Circuit City, the nation’s second largest electronics retailer, said as an alternative to bankruptcy it may close at least 150 stores, cutting thousands of jobs.

Construction of new homes and apartments dropped to an annual rate of 817,000 in September, the Commerce Department reported October 17. Excluding January 1991, housing starts have never been lower since records began in 1959.

Officials of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency have said that the transit system there faces major cutbacks because funds it borrowed from American International Group to lease trains and buses are no longer available. The giant insurance company nearly collapsed in September and Washington bailed it out with nearly

\$123 billion. Transit agencies in San Francisco, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., face similar problems, reported *USA Today*.

Meanwhile, the U.S. budget deficit for the just-ended 2008 fiscal year rose to \$455 billion. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that for the current fiscal year this will rise more than 50 percent to about \$700 billion.

Banks may sit on bailout funds

Sinking hundreds of billions of dollars by the capitalist rulers into the banking system with the aim of unlocking the credit freeze has had little effect. Banks receiving this money are under no obligation to lend it. “It’s clear that the government would like us to use the capital,” said Jamie Dimon, chief executive of JPMorgan Chase, according to the *New York Times*. “If you are a bank that is filling a hole, you obviously can’t do that.”

Since mid-2007 the nine largest U.S. commercial banks have written off \$323 billion in “troubled assets.” This wipes out their combined reported profit of \$305 billion since 2004. “Banks may sit on the capital,” noted the October 17 *International Herald-Tribune*. “Some analysts say the banks may use it to acquire weaker competitors.”

The most devastating impact of the financial crisis is on the semicolonial countries, where toilers have faced depression conditions for years. With weakening currencies, the massive debts owed to banks in imperialist centers become all the more unpayable. Declining prices of exported commodities and raw materials compound the problem. Since August 4 the Mexican peso has sunk 20 percent to an all-time low against the dollar. The Brazilian real has dropped 26 percent over this time period. South Korea’s currency, the won, is down 30 percent against the dollar this year.

Banks that have invested in stocks, bonds, and other paper products on the so-called emerging markets for much higher return rates have massively withdrawn these funds. “More than \$1.3 trillion in value has been wiped off emerging market stocks this year in cit-

ies such as Moscow, Sao Paulo, Jakarta and Osaka,” stated the *Washington Post*. The global credit crisis has also led the governments of Hungary and Ukraine to seek outside help to bail out their banks. The European Central Bank is providing Budapest with \$6.4 billion. Kiev is requesting \$14 billion from the International Monetary Fund.

‘Militant’ Subscription Drive			
Fall 2008 ♦ Sept. 27 – Nov. 23			
Week 3 of 8			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Twin Cities*	125	55	44%
Houston	90	38	42%
Boston	60	22	37%
San Francisco	140	52	37%
Des Moines, IA	125	40	32%
Miami	160	51	32%
Newark, NJ	125	39	31%
Washington D.C.	95	29	31%
Philadelphia	90	24	27%
Los Angeles	100	26	26%
Seattle	80	20	25%
Chicago	100	22	22%
New York	315	66	21%
Atlanta	250	47	19%
Other		1	
U.S. Total	1,855	532	29%
CANADA	125	44	35%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	40	20	50%
London	80	51	64%
UK Total	120	71	59%
NEW ZEALAND	70	34	49%
AUSTRALIA	55	31	56%
SWEDEN*	35	21	60%
Int’l Totals	2,260	733	32%
Should be	2,400	900	38%
*Raised goal			

Socialist Workers on the ballot in:	
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	VERMONT
	MINNESOTA
	LOUISIANA
	FLORIDA
	DELAWARE
	COLORADO
	IOWA
	GEORGIA legal write-in status
	CALIFORNIA legal write-in status
	CONNECTICUT legal write-in status

ON THE PICKET LINE

London bus drivers strike for higher wages

LONDON—Some 5,000 bus drivers here, members of the Unite union, took 24-hour strike action across the city October 10.

Union demands on the city's new mayor were chanted by flag-waving strikers. "Boris Johnson sort our wages or we'll be on strike for ages," they said.

In August and September drivers took 24- and 48-hour strike action at the Metrobus and First companies around the same issues. A further 24-hour strike is planned October 22 with drivers from First buses, Metroline, Metrobus, and Arriva taking part.

The union is demanding base pay of £30,000 (£1=\$1.75) per year for all London bus drivers.

Drivers at the picket explained that London buses are tendered by a range of different companies with divisive differences over pay, split shifts, lengthening hours, and disciplinary procedures.

Unite officer Peter Kavanagh said many drivers end up working 60 hours a week, with variations in yearly pay as much as £6,000. There are also growing safety concerns for the drivers.

—Celia Pugh

Los Angeles airport hotel workers demand union

LOS ANGELES—Some 800 hotel workers and their supporters picketed the Hilton Hotel at Los Angeles International Airport October 2 as part of the continuing effort to force the company to recognize the UNITE HERE union. They were joined by workers from more than a dozen unions, more than 20 different church representatives, and a dozen community organizations.

The workers, in their overwhelming majority Latino immigrants and Blacks, have faced reprisals, speedup on the job resulting in a dramatic increase in on-the-job injuries, and firings of union activists and organizers.



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Bus drivers on picket line during 24-hour strike in London October 10

José Molina, a former room service worker who was fired, told the crowd, "We have no fear. We shall continue to struggle together until we win." The crowd responded with the echoing

chants of "*Si, se puede!*" (Yes we can).
—Mark Friedman

Cintas laundry workers rally in Ohio for safety

Several hundred Cintas workers and their supporters rallied in Mason, Ohio, October 14 against unsafe working conditions at the uniform supplier's industrial laundries. The event took place outside the company's annual shareholder meeting, according to a UNITE HERE news release.

"Every day I work in pain. And I fear for my coworkers that another tragedy may happen," Adela Viera, a Cintas worker from Central Islip, New York, who attended the rally, told UNITE HERE.

UNITE HERE and the Teamsters currently represent about 400 Cintas workers. The unions are working with the Coalition of Injured Cintas Workers, which has been conducting a nationwide tour since July to expose poor working conditions at these plants.

Since the death of a Tulsa, Oklahoma, worker in March 2007, federal and state inspectors have cited Cintas plants for more than 90 "serious" safety violations that could cause death or serious bodily harm.

—Brian Williams

Australia: rallies demand justice for Aborigines

BY RON POULSEN

BRISBANE, Australia—"We want freedom for our brother, Lex Wotton," veteran Aboriginal activist Gracelyn Smallwood told a rally of about 100 outside the gates here of the Queensland Parliament House October 4.

Wotton, 40, a Palm Island leader, is pleading not guilty to a charge of "rioting with destruction," which can carry a life sentence. He is the last of 18 Aborigines to face trial over events on Palm Island in north Queensland four years ago.

The rally was also part of national marches timed to protest the ongoing federal takeover of remote Northern Territory Aboriginal communities, as Canberra released a review of the move.

On Nov. 26, 2004, the Aboriginal settlement on Palm Island boiled over in protest after an initial report cleared the cops in the death of a Black man in custody. A week earlier, Mulrungji Doomadgee, 36, died in prison an hour after his arrest by Senior Sergeant Christopher Hurley. He had four broken ribs and his liver smashed in half against his backbone.

After the official whitewash of the cops, 300 islanders gathered in angry protest, burning down several police buildings. Queensland cops retaliated with a massive, heavily armed police dragnet of the island, terrorizing Aboriginal residents. The unrest and subsequent national protests induced the government to try Hurley in 2007 on manslaughter and assault charges over the death of Mulrungji. He was acquitted by an all-white jury.

Smallwood told the October 4 rally that "it was political mobilizations" that forced Hurley's unprecedented trial. This was the first time a cop had been charged for killing an Aborigine in Queensland's history. Greg Eatok, an indigenous leader of the Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC) in Sydney, told the Brisbane rally that "police have been used as the army of occupation" from the long colonial war of land theft to now. "This is why Aboriginal people are still constantly bashed and killed

by cops today," he said.

On October 13 a panel review of the federal government takeover of Aboriginal communities, which authorities call "intervention," was released. The report had been delayed and rewritten to approve the move, despite criticizing aspects of the "emergency" measures begun under the previous government.

The report calls for reinstating the Racial Discrimination Act and making management of welfare payments for Aborigines in the prescribed communities "voluntary" in some cases. However, it backed continued federal intervention with heavier policing.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin promised to "consider" the report while reaffirming government commitment to the intervention.

The report cited the "injustice" felt by Aboriginal people over being blamed for "problems within their

communities that have arisen from decades of cumulative neglect by governments in failing to provide the most basic standard of health, housing, education and ancillary services enjoyed by the wider Australian community."

About 350 people in Alice Springs, led by "prescribed areas" representatives that includes 73 Aboriginal communities and joined by supporters from around the country, protested the federal takeover of outlying Aboriginal communities September 30. Some 100 protested in Sydney September 27 with similar marches in other cities.

ARC in Sydney is to hold a public forum at the Redfern Community Center November 1 to discuss and protest government attacks on Aboriginal communities across the country.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 4, 1983

[Text of an October 20 declaration by the Communist Party of Cuba following the assassination of Maurice Bishop, prime minister of Grenada]

As has now become totally clear, for some weeks and perhaps months a deepgoing conflict has been unfolding in the ruling party in Grenada and its leadership.

On Wednesday, October 12, our embassy in Grenada reported the surprising and disagreeable news that deep divisions had surfaced in the Central Committee. It was learned that Bishop's adversaries had gained a majority in the Central Committee of the party as well as in the political apparatus of the army and the security force, and that Bishop had been removed from his post in the party and put under house arrest.

No doctrine, no principle or position held up as revolutionary, and no internal division justifies atrocious proceedings like the physical elimination of Bishop.



November 3, 1958

[The following are excerpts from an Oct. 20 interview of Daniel Roberts, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senator from New Jersey on the "Fannie Hurst Showcase" Program, WNEW-TV]

Roberts: What we advocate fundamentally is a change to a system of socialism.

Arnold: Well, how do you bring about this change?

Roberts: It has to be brought about, in our opinion, by a political struggle in which the first requisite is that the working people in this country have their own political party. In our opinion both the Democrats and Republicans are run and completely dominated by Big Business and what is necessary is a political party of the working people to win the government and once they have the government in their hands to bring about a certain number of very fundamental changes.



November 4, 1933

Every effort will be made by the Calles-Rodriguez regime to prevent the Mexican peasants from rearming themselves, and to disarm those still in possession of rifles. During the last four uprisings the peasants participated on the side of the government against the counter revolution. The next uprising will find them aligned against the government which has gone over bag and baggage to the counter revolution. During the past revolts the armed peasant guerrillas proved themselves more than a match for the troops of the regular army many of which supported the rebellions.

For many years the Mexican peasants and their organizations have played an important role in the country's politics, always however as tools of the different bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political groups which paid them off with broken promises or a few rusty guns.

The Socialist Workers Party in World War II

An independent working-class course in the fight against imperialist war

BY BEN JOYCE

As Washington entered World War II, the Socialist Workers Party was well-prepared to meet the challenges of the sharpening class struggle. It had just concluded a deep political fight, breaking with elements that buckled under imperialist war pressures and strengthening its working-class character and orientation. Its cadres, rooted in the industrial unions, had been steeled in the labor battles of the 1930s.

In the United States, the largest political tendencies in the workers movement diverted militant workers from a class-struggle course. The Socialist Party gave full support to the imperialist war. The Stalinized Communist Party zigzagged as the war progressed, based on the shifting diplomatic needs of the privileged bureaucracy in Moscow. It supported the U.S. imperialist government leading up to the war, then denounced President Franklin Roosevelt's administration following the August 1939 Stalin-Hitler pact. After German imperialism invaded the Soviet Union, the U.S. Stalinists became rabid warmongers, backing the "Allied" imperialists as "antifascist" and defenders of democracy.

The Socialist Workers Party, on the other hand, maintained the Marxist



Left: "There is no peace!" explained the Aug. 18, 1945, issue of the *Militant*. The Socialist Workers Party campaigned around opposition to the imperialist war. Upper right: 1943 demonstration in New York opposes Jim Crow segregation. Lower right: 18 leaders of the SWP and Teamsters Local 544 in Minneapolis before being convicted under Smith Act.

view that in the modern epoch there is no progressive wing of the capitalist class. The major industrialized capitalist rivals, dominated by finance capital—what Marxists term imperialism—are constantly driven to wars of conquest in which they try to redivide the world's territories. The working-class vanguard, the party held, needs to explain the imperialist character of the



war and why workers and farmers must oppose it, fighting instead for their own class interests worldwide.

Vanguard workers in the United States came under increasing attack as Washington sought to drum up a patriotic campaign in support of its war drive. The Smith "Gag" Act was passed in 1940, prohibiting the advocacy of "overthrowing or destroying the government of the United States." Under this thought-control law, 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Teamsters Local 544 in Minneapolis were railroaded to prison for their class-struggle course in the labor movement, including opposition to the imperialist war. They spent between 12 and 16 months behind bars.

The Communist Party backed the Smith Act frame-ups, arguing that the SWP was "interfering with the war effort." Just a few years later, in 1949, the same law would be used to victimize many leaders of the CP, an antilabor attack the Socialist Workers Party energetically campaigned to oppose.

The government also suppressed distribution of the *Militant*. In November 1942 three issues of the paper were held up by postal authorities because of its "editorial policies and criticisms of the administration," the *Militant* noted. In March 1943 the postmaster general revoked the *Militant's* second-class mailing rights on the grounds that its articles included "stimulation of race issues" in wartime.

The labor bureaucracy parroted the bosses' patriotic rhetoric. They accepted the wartime wage freeze imposed by the Roosevelt administration and called for a "no-strike pledge" in the name of not interfering with the war effort.

The class-collaborationist course of the labor bureaucrats was not accepted by all workers. In

1943 half a million coal miners went on strike and, despite government threats to break the strike with troops, won demands for pay increases. A number of other "unauthorized" strikes took place in 1944–45. The Socialist Workers Party championed these battles.

As hundreds of thousands of workers, including many young militants, were dragged into mandatory conscription, the SWP carried out a proletarian military policy. Rather than separate themselves from the masses of workers, if drafted they went into the imperialist army and carried out political work among the ranks, working to win over as many as possible to the communist movement.

The Socialist Workers Party was actively involved in advancing the Black struggle, which was on the rise as the war unfolded. Blacks resisted discrimination and segregation, both in the military and throughout the country. In contrast, the CP told Blacks they should subordinate their struggle to the war effort.

The worldwide slaughter of workers and farmers by the imperialist powers came to a brutal climax as atomic warfare was unleashed on the people of Japan. The CP and other labor misleaders hailed the nuclear annihilation of the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In contrast, the Socialist Workers Party maintained its uncompromising opposition to the imperialist war to the end.

"There is no peace!" declared a statement by the party in the Aug. 18, 1945, issue of the *Militant*. It explained that no matter which imperialist powers came out on the top of the heap at the end of the war, there would be no peace until working people took power out of the hands of the imperialist war makers and established a workers and farmers government.

That course put the Socialist Workers Party in a strong position as the post-war labor upsurge erupted in the United States.

Effort needed to get on schedule with SWP Party-building Fund

BY BEN JOYCE

After the second week of the \$90,000 Party-building Fund for the Socialist Workers Party, \$14,210 has been contributed. That's \$5,790 short of the target this week.

Branches of the SWP and supporters are organizing over the coming weeks to get on schedule and to keep up on steady weekly contributions that are a key to the success of the fund.

As part of this effort public meetings are being held around the country in celebration of the SWP's 80 years of

revolutionary Marxist leadership in the United States. The meetings feature talks by SWP leaders that highlight the party's continuity and participation in the class struggle today and an appeal for funds toward the \$90,000 goal.

In Des Moines, Iowa, a meeting was held featuring Joe Swanson of the SWP in Des Moines and Betsy Farley, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois. They spoke about the long history of the party in the Midwest and the new opportunities opening to the communist movement today.

John Banister, a student at Iowa State University and supporter of Socialist Workers candidates in the November elections, also spoke. He said campaigning with the SWP has been a positive experience for him, especially in Postville, Iowa, in response to resistance by workers there to a massive immigration raid last May.

Those in attendance at the Des Moines meeting pledged nearly \$600 towards the fund.

Contributions are being collected by local branches of the party. For more information on how to contribute, contact a distributor on page 8.

\$90,000 Socialist Workers Party Party-building Fund			
Fall 2008 ♦ Week 2			
CITY	QUOTA	PAID	%
Miami	\$3,200	\$1,042	33%
Washington, D.C.	\$4,300	\$1,360	32%
Los Angeles	\$8,500	\$2,280	27%
New York	\$15,500	\$2,941	19%
Chicago	\$8,000	\$1,420	18%
San Francisco	\$13,000	\$2,345	18%
Des Moines, IA*	\$2,000	\$295	15%
Seattle	\$6,500	\$930	14%
Philadelphia	\$3,500	\$412	12%
Newark, NJ	\$3,500	\$355	10%
Boston	\$2,800	\$200	7%
Houston	\$2,500	\$175	7%
Twin Cities*	\$6,000	\$320	5%
Atlanta*	\$8,500	\$135	2%
Total	\$87,800	\$14,210	16%
Should be	\$90,000	\$20,000	22%
*raised goal			

Communist continuity

The Socialist Workers Party in World War II by James P. Cannon

Writings and speeches of the principal leader of the U.S. communist movement outlining the SWP's anti-imperialist proletarian course in those years. —\$24.95

Fighting Racism in World War II by C.L.R. James and others

A week-by-week account of the struggle against racism and discrimination in the United States from 1939 to 1945. —\$22

Letters from Prison by James P. Cannon

Jailed for opposition to U.S. imperialism's involvement in World War II, Cannon writes on the key questions facing the communist movement in the class battles that would follow the war. —\$22

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Financial crisis sparks interest in socialism

BY SETH GALINSKY

Róger Calero and Alyson Kennedy, the Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice president, have been crisscrossing the United States, with an additional short stop by Calero in Montreal in early October.

They have walked picket lines with striking workers in both countries, joined protests against the death penalty and to stop the execution of Troy Davis, talked with farmers, marched against immigration raids and for legalizing immigrants, and spoken with hundreds of high school and college students in classrooms and campus meetings.

In a phone interview with the *Militant*—Calero from Seattle, Kennedy in Miami—both said that the financial crisis has sparked more interest in the campaign.

“You get a little bit of a different response now,” Calero said. “There is a greater sense among working people that something is very wrong with the system and economy and that neither Obama nor McCain offer a solution.”

“Workers, youth, and others we speak to are listening seriously to the revolutionary perspective being offered by the Socialist Workers candidates,” Calero emphasized.

“We point out that the bailout and similar measures are designed to save their system. It’s a good opportunity to point out that the real problem is capitalism.”

“I’ve found a lot of people who are very angry about what’s going on, the bailout, unemployment,” Calero said. “This anger is directed at the government and corrupt politicians or greedy capitalists.”

‘Need a workers and farmers gov’t’

“But anger is not enough, it’s not a road forward,” he explained. “It’s not what you’re against, it’s what you’re for. The problems won’t go away unless we get rid of the system and replace it with a government of workers and farmers.”

“We’ve been running into laborers who used to work every day,” Calero said. “Now they’re getting jobs once or twice a week because of the credit freeze and slowdown.” He also noted the jump in unemployment among Blacks, a direct consequence of the reality of last

hired, first fired under capitalism.

The deepest division fostered on working people by capitalism, the socialist candidates explain, is between employed and unemployed. To unite working people, the socialist candidates call for shortening the workweek with no cut in pay to spread available work. And they call for a massive public works program at union-scale wages. “People really like that,” Kennedy said, “building the things we need: housing, bridges, levees, mass transit, schools.”

Working-class solidarity

“We need to get out of the framework of competing with each other for jobs and instead fight for the interests of the entire working class,” Kennedy said. “That’s why affirmative action is so important.” Affirmative action programs set quotas for the hiring of Blacks, other minorities, and women, to help combat racism and discrimination.

“When we also explain that we are for free, universal health care for all, some ask, ‘Where is the money going to come from?’” Calero said. “With the bailout scam and the billions the government is pouring into the banks and markets, we can easily point out that funding these programs is not a problem. We can take back and put to good use the wealth that working people create.”

The financial crisis has really affected the kinds of questions asked at many meetings. “I’m getting fewer questions on what I think about Obama, Clinton, McCain and other candidates and more on what we’re for,” Kennedy said.

Life-or-death questions for unions

The impact of the May Day actions, beginning in 2006 when millions of immigrant workers took the day off from work and marched for legalization and against deportations, “hasn’t gone away,” Calero said. “I saw the confidence of immigrant workers in Postville, Iowa, who are awaiting trial after the raid there, who are not allowed to work, but continue to see themselves as



Militant photos by John Studer (above), Jacquie Henderson (inset)
Top: Socialist Workers presidential candidate Róger Calero talks with poultry workers in Georgetown, Delaware, August 16. **Inset:** Alyson Kennedy campaigns among workers in New Orleans August 10.

part of the struggle.”

While in San Francisco, Calero joined a picket line by construction workers, both Black and Latino, who were protesting firings and unsafe working conditions at a job site. “Black workers were calling out to their Latino coworkers to join in the protest, which shut down the site for several hours,” he said.

“The bosses will continue to try to drive down wages, to deepen the divisions among working people, and this will be more of a question as unemployment and job competition grow,” Calero said.

“That’s why both legalization of immigrants and affirmative action are life-or-death questions for the unions and working people as a whole.”

‘Vote for what you’re for’

At many meetings students and workers who haven’t made up their minds on who they are going to vote for have come to listen to Kennedy and Calero.

“A student at Spelman College told me that he was going to vote for Obama as the lesser evil,” Kennedy reported. “He said he knew that Obama would carry out much the same course as McCain.”

“I told him that if you vote for someone who’s politics you oppose, you’ll get what you vote for,” she said. “Don’t vote for what your against. Vote for what you’re for.”

“I raise the need for a labor party, that we need a mass working-class party based on unions in the struggle, a party

that can mobilize working people.”

“I point out that Obama, like McCain, is for the war in Afghanistan, for U.S. intervention in Pakistan,” Kennedy said. “Róger and I are for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq; Afghanistan; Guantánamo Bay, Cuba; and everywhere else they are stationed around the world.”

“Obama, like McCain,” Calero pointed out, “Tells us we’re all in this together, rich and poor, Black and white, that we need to tighten our belts. When they say we must sacrifice, they mean the workers must sacrifice, not them.”

“I agree with what you say,” one student told me. “But how can you make a revolution?” Another student wanted a detailed plan on how to nationalize industry after I said the oil companies would be nationalized and put under workers control.

“I pointed to the experience of the Cuban Revolution, where workers and peasants nationalized companies and the revolutionary government backed them up,” Kennedy said.

“If Alyson and I are elected,” Calero said, “we will continue doing what we are doing, organizing a movement to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class, promoting our program and demands that can unite working people.”

“If we’re not elected, we and our party will continue doing the same thing. That’s why workers should vote for the SWP candidates and continue to join together in action after election day.”

SWP candidate: ‘Stop execution of Troy Davis’

The following open letter was sent October 16 by Eleanor García, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Georgia, to Gov. Sonny Perdue and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles, demanding a halt to the execution of Troy Davis scheduled for October 27. The Supreme Court October 14 turned down Davis’s appeal for a hearing of his death sentence. García sent the statement on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party U.S. congressional candidates in Georgia: Loretta Van Pelt, 3rd District; Jacob Perasso, 4th District; and Jeanne FitzMaurice, 5th District.

Dear Members of the Board of Pardons and Paroles:

On behalf of the Socialist Workers Party candidates in Georgia, I demand that you use your power to grant paroles, pardons, reprieves, remissions, commutations, and to restore civil and political rights to stop the execution of Troy Davis.

Davis’ trial was a police and pros-

ecution organized frame-up. There was no physical evidence presented and the conviction was based entirely on eyewitness testimony. Since the trial, seven of the nine witnesses who identified Davis have recanted their testimony. Some of them have said they testified only because the police pressured them to do so. Several additional witnesses have come forward to state that Davis did not kill Mark Allen MacPhail. Had all of this been known to the jury, conviction is very unlikely.

After his conviction, Davis had no lawyer for five years because Georgia’s indigent defense system would not provide one for post-conviction appeals. This is the reason for the delay in the appeals process.

The refusal by the Supreme Court to hear Davis’ appeal demonstrates that the purpose of the death penalty and the “criminal justice system” is to intimidate workers. It has nothing to do with justice for workers. While the government continues to defend use of the death pen-

alty, which a growing number of people worldwide condemn, even more workers are killed by police acting as judge, jury, and executioner in the street.

As the capitalist financial crisis deepens, the rulers in this country will shift more of the burden onto the backs of workers. Speedup will intensify and working conditions deteriorate, endangering more workers’ lives and safety on the job. Social services will be cut, unemployment will rise, and the bosses will press to further lower wages. The death penalty and legislation such as the Patriot Act, increasing police and border patrol, and the recent law expanding the police powers of surveillance are preparations to fight the working-class resistance that the rulers know will follow.

Once again, I demand that you stop the execution of Troy Davis!

Sincerely,
Eleanor García
 SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia

Is socialist revolution in the U.S. possible?

“To think that a socialist revolution in the U.S. is not possible, you would have to believe not only that the ruling families of the imperialist countries and their economic wizards have found a way to ‘manage’ capitalism. You would also have to close your eyes to the spreading imperialist wars, civil wars, and economic, financial, and social crises we are in the midst of.”

—Mary-Alice Waters

Caracas, Venezuela, November 2007

—\$5

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Educational weekend

Continued from front page

borhoods Saturday morning to campaign for the SWP candidates in the November elections and circulate the *Militant* newspaper, and joined a rally to support strikers at the Stella D'Oro bakery in the Bronx.

"This socialist educational weekend is the culmination of an intensive period of collective study here in New York," said Debbie Lazar, the education director of the New York Headquarters branch of the SWP, as she welcomed participants to the class series. At the same time socialists have been campaigning on the streets and joining fights for legalization of undocumented workers and union struggles, "we've carried out a systematic study of the history and continuity of the world communist movement, holding classes in New York twice weekly throughout the summer," she said.

The socialist summer school studied the *Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Frederick Engels; "On the History of the Communist League" by Engels; *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Engels; *The History of American Trotskyism* by James P. Cannon; and issue number 14 of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. In the six months prior to the summer school, SWP and YS members, along with others interested in joining the communist movement, studied *The First Ten Years of American Communism* by James P. Cannon and *The Third International After Lenin* by Leon Trotsky.

Refuting capitalists' arguments

"At this time of worldwide capitalist financial crisis," Lazar explained, "we thought it would be appropriate and necessary to go back to 1865 and study Marx's writings on political economy. We selected Marx's *Wages, Price and Profit* because it refutes the capitalists' arguments about why the working class must sacrifice, accept wage cuts, and tighten our belts."

"Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future" was chosen for study because it "shows why unions are an absolute necessity, and also why they must champion social and political movements and fight for the emancipation of the entire working class," Lazar said.

In the weeks leading up to the classes, a syllabus, suggested read-

ings, and questions were circulated to all participants, to allow ample time for study prior to the weekend. Meetings were organized for those making presentations to collectively think out how best to present the material and lead the discussion.

Dan Fein, a garment worker and SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in New York's 10th District, introduced the first of two sessions on *Wages, Price and Profit*. He noted that Marxist education "is not light reading." It requires concentrated, disciplined work. Ben O'Shaughnessy, a meat packer and organizer of the Young Socialists National Steering Committee, initiated the second session on the pamphlet. After each presentation participants broke into smaller groups for discussion.

The pamphlet is based on two talks Marx gave to the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association, also known as the First International, in 1865. Marx's talk answered the argument of the employers that wage increases harm the working class—and everyone else—because they force prices to go up. Within the First International, the bosses' line against raising wages was supported by carpenter John Weston. Presenting extensive documentation on the trends in wages and prices, Marx showed that Weston's thesis was completely false. He then explained how the capitalist exploits the worker, paying wages that represent only a portion of the value the worker produces and pocketing the rest as surplus value.

The employers constantly seek to drive down wages and lengthen the working day to boost their rate of profit, Marx wrote. What flows from this, he said, is that the labor movement cannot simply engage in struggle after struggle to raise wages and reduce work hours. The entire wages system must be abolished, he explained. This can only be done by workers taking political power out of the employers' hands.

The discussion on "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future" was kicked off by Sara Lobman, a garment worker and SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey. The class



Militant photos by Maura DeLuca (above), Robin Mace (inset)

Discussion group studies *Wages, Price and Profit* by Karl Marx during session of educational weekend on "Trade Unions and the Working-Class Fight for State Power" held in New York October 18–19. Right, Steve Clark, member of SWP National Committee, addresses Militant Labor Forum of nearly 100 people that was part of weekend's program.



studied how the First International was founded out of the rise of working-class struggles in both Europe and the United States in the 1860s. Marx drafted the document to explain how trade unions arose and the role they must play, particularly in the political arena.

Future role of unions

The document ends on the future role of the trade unions: "Apart from their original purposes, they must now learn to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interest of its *complete emancipation*. They must aid every social and political movement tending in that direction. Considering themselves and acting as the champions and representatives of the whole working class, they cannot fail to enlist the non-society men into their ranks. They must look carefully after the interests of the worst paid trades, such as the agricultural laborers, rendered powerless by exceptional circumstances. They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions."

In addition to the classes, nearly 100 people attended a Saturday evening forum on "The Working-Class Fight for Political Power: Defending Workers and Farmers as the Capitalist Crisis Deepens." The speaker was Steve Clark, a member of the SWP National Committee.

Participants first sat down to a delicious meal prepared by volunteers. Breakfast and lunch were also served on Sunday to allow those in the classes to concentrate on their studies and continue the discussion over meal breaks.

In his talk Clark said that *Wages, Price and Profit* is "not a primer of Marxist economics but a political weapon" that explains why the working-class movement must be part of workers' struggles, including those by the unions and why, at the same time, the unions cannot advance the interests of the working class without a political instrument that fights to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters.

Among those attending the forum for the first time were two welders originally from Ecuador. They had met a team of socialist campaigners

Continued on page 9

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For further reading

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

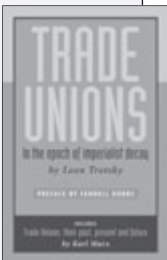
by Leon Trotsky

Food for thought—and action—from leaders of three generations of the modern revolutionary workers movement. Invaluable to the practical education of militant workers who are relearning today what a strike is and how it can be fought and won—militants who in the course of such struggles become interested in how the entire system of capitalist exploitation can be ended.

Preface by Farrell Dobbs

Includes "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present and Future" by Karl Marx **\$15**

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Oppose the U.S. war in Pakistan

Washington’s nearly eight-year occupation of Afghanistan and stepped-up operations in Pakistan register its broadening “war on terror” in the region. Bombing and missile strikes by U.S. military fighter jets and Predator drones along the border region inside Pakistan—a blatant violation of Pakistan’s sovereignty—are increasing. In at least one instance, U.S. ground troops attacked a Pakistani village. Special forces from Washington and London are now training and fighting alongside Pakistan’s Frontier Corps. The U.S. government has announced plans to upgrade Pakistan’s air force to draw it into these operations in a bigger way.

With Gen. David Petraeus taking charge of the U.S. Central Command, further moves are being made to broaden out how the U.S. military conducts counterinsurgency operations in the region. As was done in Iraq, Washington is working to enlist tribal militias to fight the Taliban and al-Qaeda, something the Pakistani military has already successfully begun to do in Pakistan.

These moves are being combined with boosting U.S. and NATO forces on the ground in Afghanistan. Some 8,500 additional U.S. troops will be stationed there by early 2009, joining the 64,000 U.S. and NATO troops currently occupying the country. An additional 15,000 U.S. troops are being requested by the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. David McKiernan.

Washington is ratcheting up the war in Afghanistan and Pakistan with little opposition. This course has the backing of the Democrats and Republicans. Both Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama and his Republican rival John McCain call for increased troops to Afghanistan. Obama says he would use a drawdown of troops from Iraq to bolster the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. He openly backs direct U.S. military intervention in Pakistan.

The so-called war against terrorism is really a war aimed at the rights and living standards of working people around the world, including in the United States. You can see its immediate toll in the increased civilian casualties from Washington’s military operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the United States, we’ve seen new laws expanding the scope of spying and surveillance by the FBI and other government police agencies and the deployment on U.S. soil of the first combat unit dedicated to the U.S. Northern Command. The ruling rich are preparing to confront workers in the class battles over health and pension benefits, union power, wages and living standards, and work conditions that they know will come as workers and farmers begin to resist the affects of the economic crisis.

Working people need to demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Afghanistan, Pakistan, as well as Iraq and everywhere else U.S. forces are stationed. Not one person, not one penny for Washington’s wars!

Marxist educational weekend

Continued from page 8

that morning and decided to hear more about the communist perspective.

Clark noted that the big-business press today echoes charges against workers that are similar to the slanders the factory owners directed against the proletariat in Marx’s time. He quoted an article in the October 18 *Washington Post* that said the Boeing strike, “if not resolved soon, could make it difficult for the world’s largest aircraft manufacturer to weather the recession, weakening a giant of industrial America.

“Last week, the Federal Reserve said the Boeing strike contributed to the 2.8 percent decrease in industrial production in September, the steepest drop in 34 years.”

Clark said it is not true the Boeing strike is responsible for the capitalist economic crisis, any more than workers who fight for wage increases are the cause of

inflation. These problems are the result of the workings of the capitalist system.

The current financial crisis of world capitalism will not be resolved in a few months or even years, Clark said. Bourgeois economists themselves predict unemployment will increase to at least the levels of the early 1980s, when the official jobless rate hit almost 10 percent.

Clark said there is no “superimperialist” solution that will resolve the crisis. But as V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian Revolution, pointed out, there is no hopeless situation for the capitalist class. It simply has to remain in power. That underscores the necessity of constructing disciplined, working-class parties today, made up of cadres steeled in Marxist education and engaged in the class struggle, so that the working class will have the instruments it needs to take political power when revolutionary openings do come about.

LETTERS

California train wreck

In regards to the article on the California train wreck in the October 20 *Militant*, it must be noted that implementation of new technologies such as positive train control go hand in hand with productivity drives by the rail bosses. Please refer to their goals in the most recent rail negotiations, where they outlined their desire to reduce train crew size. Workers should demand these safety improvements be installed with no train crew size reduction or job losses.

D.C.
Houston, Texas

Marx was right

This latest financial disaster seems to validate what Marx said about mounting contradictions in capitalism. Just when it is almost gospel that market economies are the only way for societies to prosper we are thrown into a crisis.

I am just a retired worker, but I see the vast distance between me and those in power. I fought in Vietnam as a young man and now we are engaged in wars without end.

John King
Tampa Bay, Florida

‘Don’t have a clue’

The University of Toronto Institute for Policy Analysis published a report on recent financial developments entitled “We Don’t Have

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

a Clue and We’re Not Going to Pretend That We Do.” The *Militant*’s tone, as well as its content, do stand out from the pack.

Katy LeRougetel
Montreal, Canada

Housing market collapse

In Middletown, Delaware, realtor William Webber has responded to the collapse of the local housing market by designing and copyrighting a new sign for his listings. The new sign reads “YARD SALE! Home included.” Truly a sign of the times.

Roy Inglee
Wilmington, Delaware

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Islamabad

Continued from front page

vi Sahar Gul, killing three women and two children. Sahar Gul, according to the *Daily Jang*, was affiliated with a faction inside the Tehrik-i-Taliban that is opposed to fighting the Pakistani government and instead focuses on fighting U.S. forces in Afghanistan. A day after the U.S. strike, this faction announced its complete break with the Tehrik-i-Taliban, which is led by Baitullah Mehsud, whose forces have attacked the Pakistani military.

Islamabad has condemned U.S. attacks on Pakistani soil as fanning popular hatred and making it more difficult for Pakistan’s military to carry out its own counterinsurgency along the Afghan border. The Pakistani government criticized a substantial U.S. operation in September in which U.S. ground troops opened fire on a village in South Waziristan, killing at least 16 civilians.

The U.S. military has carried out at least 11 missile attacks on Pakistan along the Afghan border in the last month and a half alone. The attacks have killed dozens of civilians. A June 11 U.S. air strike killed 11 government border troops.

The Pakistani military began a major offensive in the Bajur region in August, which it says has killed more than 1,000 Islamist militiamen so far. Pakistani fighter planes bombed Islamists’ positions in mid-October, killing 60, according to a Pakistani military spokesman.

“We have used our air force for the first time, thereby diminishing the need for America to come into the Pakistani side and bomb,” Husain Haqqani, Pakistani ambassador to the United States, told Morton Kondracke, a Washington columnist.

Similar to what Washington did in Iraq, Islamabad has been successful in enlisting some local militias to fight groups allied with al-Qaeda and the Taliban. “We have a tribal awakening program whereby the tribes are being mobilized to fight al-Qaeda and the Taliban,” Haqqani told Kondracke. According to Pakistani Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas, Islamabad has enlisted nearly 10,000 militia from three different tribes.

A suicide car bomb killed at least 20 and injured 70 members of a tribal militia in the Orakzai region in Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas. The meeting of some 500 was discussing plans to launch an assault on a nearby anti-government base.

The same day four tribal leaders allied with Islamabad were beheaded in Bajur. Nearly 190,000 people left the Bajur region since the offensive began two months ago, according to the United Nations.

In Afghanistan, Washington is looking for similar openings to train and equip tribal militias to fight the Taliban and al-Qaeda, as well as train the Afghan regular army.

The Pakistan Peoples Party government of Asif Zardari has been trying to win broader support from other parties in Pakistan’s parliament for the country’s continued war against Islamist militias. The new government, which came to power this year, brought a measure of civilian rule following the end of the military dictatorship of close U.S. ally President Pervez Musharraf.

In a break with past practice, military officials briefed members of parliament October 8 on the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Since July 2007, nearly 1,200 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in suicide attacks across the country.

The debate on the war was ongoing as of October 20 as a number of members of parliament pressed for immediate peace negotiations with the Taliban.

Meanwhile the country is gripped in a severe economic crisis. In some of the tribal areas there is a severe shortage of food and electricity, a member of parliament said during the recent round of debates.

Inflation in Pakistan reached 25 percent this month, the rupee lost about one-third of its value so far this year, and foreign currency holdings have fallen by more than half since 2007. Foreign currency reserves, which currently stand at less than \$8 billion, have been falling at a rate of about \$1 billion a month. The country’s benchmark 100-stock index has dropped by 40 percent since April.

Islamabad says it needs at least \$2 billion immediately and an additional \$8 billion by early next year. The government is seeking low-interest loans from the United States, China, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the World Bank.